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MASTER FILE

DSSD CENSUS 2000 PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM SERIES G- 6

MEMORANDUM FOR      Brian Monaghan  
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Subject:                Observation of Block Canvassing-Wave 3, In and Around  
                                 Minneapolis, Minnesota

On Thursday April 22 and Friday April 23, 1999, I visited the Minneapolis early local census office (ELCO), number 2626, to observe Block Canvassing operations. Each day I was with a different crew leader who directed me to observe listing or to observe quality assurance (QA) operations. I also observed the check-in of the address books (AB) and discussed various issues with the assistant manager for field operations (AMFO) or other office personnel.

On Thursday, due to rainy weather, I spent a good amount of time in the office. The AMFO made several points.

1. There is a pay disparity depending on where enumerators live. Those living in Hennipin or Ramsey counties, which encompass the cities of Minneapolis, St. Paul and several smaller surrounding communities, earned \$11.75 an hour. Those living in bordering Dakota county earned \$9.25 an hour. Dakota county includes smaller cities like Mendota Hills and Hyland. These are expensive suburban communities with a low unemployment rate. The AMFO reported it was more difficult to hire people living in the counties with a lower pay scale. Applicants who had seen or heard advertisements for the higher wage were disappointed when offered the lower wage. As a matter of fact, the crew leader who I observed with had a mix of enumerators earning different pay levels, which he said caused near universal morale problems or complaints among his crew members.
2. Enumerators often worked in the evening or on a weekend, as those times were favorable for finding residents at home. They were not, however, accorded any pay differential for this work.



3. The AMFO indicated that the Minneapolis ELCO was required by directives from the Kansas City Regional Office (RO) to hire more workers than necessary. This resulted in several problems. First, there was an excessive training load. More importantly, workers promised six weeks of work would only be receiving three or four weeks of work. This would make it more difficult for the census to hire in the future due to poor public relations.
4. The ELCO did not have a personal computer (PC) for electronic mail (e-mail) outside of the Intranet. Thus, many materials needed to be communicated by telephone, fax, Federal Express or delivery that could have been otherwise e-mailed.
5. I observed the check-in of several completed ABs. The clerk was conscientious and proceeded correctly.
6. An assistant to the field operating supervisor (FOS) pointed out that the crew leaders did not know what census tract they were working in. It was not indicated from their maps and was not easily obtained by the street index. The certified job applicants, however, were listed by census tract. Thus, having the census tract information on their maps would have simplified the crew leader's hiring.

Thursday afternoon I observed the enumeration of a block in Mendota Heights. The crew leader came along with the enumerator. The enumerator followed procedures correctly. Of interest was an upstairs apartment of a corner property that had two addresses, a faded one on the mailbox indicating it was on Dakota Street and a more recent address scribbled in chalk above the mailbox indicating the address was on Charlton Street. The address in the listing book was what was on the faded mailbox. The enumerator choose to leave the address as it was in the listing book.

Later that day I observed an assistant crew leader perform dependent QA on an enumerator. All procedures were followed correctly and without problem. The crew leader indicated that the procedure was straightforward, easy to understand and implement. In this case the crew leader found no enumerator errors. The crew leader noted a problem with the Dependent QA form (D-453.1), however. When one wrote on the back in ink or dark pencil it would interfere with reading the form on the front side.

On Friday I observed a crew leader performing weekly observation on a new enumerator (this enumerator had missed two weeks of enumerating). The enumerator was reluctant to attempt interviews at housing units where he felt there was no one home, such as when the blinds were drawn down and there was mail in the mailbox. The crew leader had to use much persuasion to induce the enumerator to attempt an interview where appropriate. Judging from the enumerator's outspokenly unconvinced attitude, I do not believe that he intended to attempt interviews as



sequentially the addresses on the ground. This enumerator believed that one should follow the book when listing, not follow the ground. Since the enumerator brought up the issue, I corrected her and later mentioned it to the crew leader. The enumerator also neglected to hand out the Privacy Act Notice (D-31) and occasionally failed to inquire about housing units on both sides of an asterisked unit when it was appropriate. Of interest in this block was the presence of many duplexes. Some had been converted to single units since 1990 and others had been unconverted from single units back to duplexes since 1990. In some of these cases there were three addresses in the listing book: a basic street address, and then the basic street addresses with Apartment A and Apartment B. The enumerator handled these cases correctly. She correctly applied the duplicate code (D2) when there were three-addresses listed for a duplex. Likewise, she correctly applied the delete code (D1) when there were two addresses, i.e., Apt A and Apt B, listed for just one unit.

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